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Agenda item 33
Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/291, upon the recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), the General Assembly endorsed the proposals, recommendations and conclusions contained in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/61/19, Part II). In paragraph 71 of the report, the Special Committee invited the President of the General Assembly to convene, at the earliest possible date during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly and with the participation of all Member States, an ad hoc open-ended working group on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, to consider the draft United Nations policy statement and draft United Nations comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff or related personnel (A/60/877, annex), with a view to reporting, to the Assembly before the end of its sixty-first session on the outcome of the working group.

2. Pursuant to the same resolution, on 31 July 2007, the President of the General Assembly announced the appointment of Jorge Urbina, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations, as Chairperson of the working group.

II. Organizational matters

A. Opening and duration of the session

3. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse met at United Nations Headquarters on 3 August 2007 and held one meeting.

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4. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Field Support acted as the substantive secretariat, while the Disarmament and Peace Affairs Branch of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management served as technical secretariat of the Working Group.

5. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the Working Group, who made an opening statement.

B. Agenda

6. At its 1st meeting, on 3 August, the Working Group adopted the provisional agenda (A/AC.274/2007/L.1), which read as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. Briefing by the Secretariat.
5. General exchange of views.
6. Report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.
7. Other matters.

C. Documentation

7. The Working Group had before it the following documents:

Draft United Nations policy statement and draft United Nations comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff or related personnel (A/60/877, annex)

Provisional agenda (A/AC.274/2007/L.1)

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman (A/AC.274/2007/L.2)

Draft report (A/AC.274/2007/L.3)

D. Proceedings of the Working Group

8. At its 1st meeting, on 3 August, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Officer-in-Charge for the Department of Field Support briefed the Working Group on the background of the issue under consideration.

9. At the same meeting, statements were made by the following member States: Islamic Republic of Iran, United States of America, Canada (on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand), Portugal (on behalf of the European Union), Argentina, Pakistan and Qatar.

10. Also at the same meeting, the Chairperson introduced a draft decision for adoption by the General Assembly (A/AC.274/2007/L.2) and the Working Group adopted it (see para. 14 below).

11. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Working Group made a statement on the programme budget implications of its draft decision.

12. Also at the same meeting, the Working Group decided to hold a meeting on 12 September 2007 for members to make general statements.

III. Report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session

13. At its 1st meeting, on 3 August 2007, the Chairperson proposed a number of amendments to the draft report and the Working Group adopted its draft report (A/AC.274/2007/L.3) as orally amended.

IV. Recommendation of the Working Group

14. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

> "The General Assembly, recalling its resolutions 59/300 of 22 June 2005, 60/236 of 6 June 2006 and 61/291 of 24 July 2007:
>
> "(a) Decides to defer the convening of the substantive session of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse to the sixty-second session of the General Assembly;
>
> "(b) Requests the Working Group to meet from 3 to 7 December 2007 and to submit a report on its work to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session."